

How do you like that? There are 56 programs to help people understand finances. If that isn't an emblem of government waste, I don't know what is. We are going to be \$1.6 trillion in the red this year alone. Not only do we think we are in a position to teach other people about financial literacy, we have 56 overlapping programs to do it. If we are going to create the conditions for private sector job growth in this country, this is a good place to start.

We have to stop spending money we don't have on more government and calling that progress. Democrats have tried that. They have borrowed \$3 trillion over the past 2 years to expand the size and scope of government. And what has it gotten us? It has gotten us 3 million more lost jobs.

We have made some progress this week—a very small step, perhaps, but one in the right direction. At the same time, the White House took another step backward this week by failing to fulfill another responsibility. According to the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act, the President is required to submit a reform proposal for Medicare if more than 45 percent of the program's finances are being drawn from the government's general revenue fund instead of a fund specifically set aside for Medicare for 2 years in a row. As of today, that is the situation. As of today, that is the situation. The President is supposed to have taken care of this, but he hasn't. He is punting on this responsibility just as he punted on other reforms in the 10-year budget plan he released last month.

Washington's unsustainable spending on entitlements such as Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security must be addressed now—now—and we will never be able to ensure the stability and solvency of any of them without Presidential leadership. In this case, that is not just my opinion; the law actually requires it.

Now, just one more word on the continuing resolution. Once we pass this stopgap spending measure, we will be right back at it again 2 weeks from now unless we can reach an agreement on a long-term measure before then.

The House has sent us a bill that will keep the government funded through the end of the year. At the moment this next continuing resolution expires, we will be nearly halfway through the fiscal year. The House bill contains a much needed defense spending bill for the rest of the year. Many important programs have been delayed, and Secretary Gates has made clear that further delay will harm combat readiness. So there are many compelling reasons for us to reach agreement on a longer term bill.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes, the majority controlling the next 30 minutes, and the remaining time until 11 a.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COBURN. I also ask the Chair to advise me when I have consumed 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will do so.

#### GAO REPORT

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I thank the majority leader and the minority leader both for their comments on this report. It is important for the American people to know that this is the first of three reports we are going to receive. This report just covers what the GAO has looked at in the last 4 to 5 years. It truly only covers about one-third of the Federal Government, and I am talking discretionary programs, not mandatory programs such as Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid.

The GAO report shows at least \$100 billion in savings if we could do our job. We are going to have a large debate over the next 2 weeks focused on funding the government for the next 6 months of this fiscal year and what the funding is going to be like in the next year. If I were sitting at home as a regular American looking at Congress, having read this report, the question I would ask is, Why will there be any debate at all? The GAO has given us a roadmap. They have said: Here is where \$100 billion—those are my numbers, not theirs—of savings can come on an annualized basis on the first third of the discretionary side of the Federal Government. The discretionary programs of this government are 24 percent greater now than they were 2 years ago.

The challenge we face before us as a nation is a far greater challenge than anything we have ever faced. That sounds like a gigantic overstatement, but when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is head of all of our military, reporting to our civilian officials, says the greatest threat to this country is our debt, we ought to wake up and pay attention to it. The average American—75 percent of Americans—

across this land wants the size of the Federal Government and its spending reduced, and that includes Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. What is lacking today is the leadership to define the problem for the American people so that we can come together as a nation and solve this greatest of all challenges before us.

Let me spend a minute talking about what is going to happen if we don't solve it. We heard the minority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, talk about the \$1.65 trillion deficit this year. Today, the United States is borrowing money, on average, for everything we have borrowed, for about 2 percent. The historical average at which we borrow money is around 6 percent. Over the next 2 years, we are going to add, if we don't change things drastically—and I am talking drastically—another \$3.5 trillion to the debt, to bring us to almost \$18 trillion worth of debt. If we apply our historical interest rate to the debt—which we will be at in 2 or 3 years, there is no question about that—of 6 percent to \$18 trillion, what we get is \$1.08 trillion a year in interest costs. Think about that. We spent \$127 billion this last year on interest, and we are going to take \$1 trillion.

What happens if that happens? What that means is there is no discretionary budget. That means there is no money for the military; there is no money for education; there is no money for any or all of the programs other than Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. That is the only thing that is left. And if that happens, our ability to borrow money in the international market will markedly decline, and the likelihood is that interest rates will go even higher than our historical average of 6 percent.

So the time to call us together, the time for shared sacrifice—not for sacrifice's sake but so we can restore the hope of prosperity for our Nation—is now. It is not tomorrow, it is now.

We are going to have a small bill on the floor that over the next 2 weeks will eliminate \$4 billion by advancing terminations of programs both President Bush and President Obama want to terminate and eliminate \$2.7 billion worth of earmarks that are inappropriate. So that is \$4 billion over 2 weeks. Our interest cost today and what we are borrowing is \$3 billion. That is what we are borrowing a day that we don't have. Every day, we go into the markets and borrow \$3 billion. So over these 2 weeks, 14 days—14 days—we are going to borrow \$42 billion, and we are only going to save \$4 billion. Do my colleagues see the magnitude of the problem? We cannot continue to go in this direction.

The bill the House sent us is a step in the right direction but far less than what is needed based on the reality of what is in front of us. Every dollar this government spends, we borrow 40 cents of it—40 cents. What do we think a 20-year-old individual out there is going to see 20 years from now as a consequence of us going down the drain in

terms of the interest costs and the debt?

Necessity is the mother of invention. We have a need now as a nation—not as Republicans and Democrats but as a Nation—to come together and make the decisions that will put us on a course that guarantees the future for our kids and grandkids. The easiest way I know right now to take some of the sting out of the parochialism and partisanship is for every Member of this body and those in the House to become acutely aware of what this report says.

The minority leader listed a few of the programs. Let me go through these. Sitting at home or sitting in your office, think about if any of this makes sense.

There are 82 separate teacher training programs run by the Federal Government—82 separate sets of bureaucracies and sets of Federal employees. None of these teacher training programs, by the way, have a metric on them to evaluate whether they are successful. So when we are not successful—and I question whether it is even the role of the Federal Government to be involved in teacher training. I couldn't find it in the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson couldn't find it in the Constitution. Roosevelt couldn't find it in the Constitution. Johnson couldn't find it in the Constitution. They all said so. We have quotes on that. Yet we have 82 programs, none of which do we know whether they are working.

We have 47 job training programs, 44 of which overlap one another—some to the degree of 100 percent, some 60 percent. We spend \$18 billion a year on it, and not one of them has a measurement of whether it is effective. We have a great need in our country today to retrain people to available jobs. Yet we don't have any idea whether these will work. If you are trying to figure out how to get through these programs, you need another government program to help you figure out how to get through them.

We have 20 offices with programs for homeless people—20 different programs—at the Federal level. Again, if you read the Constitution and the enumerated powers, you find a real difficulty in saying whether that is a Federal responsibility versus a State responsibility. Yet we have 20 separate programs for homeless people. How about one that works—if, in fact, it is a responsibility of the Federal Government.

We run 80 separate economic development programs—80 of them. That is in four different Cabinet agencies. We spend \$6.5 billion a year, and what the GAO says is you cannot say whether there is any economic development that has come out of this \$6.5 billion.

The Department of Transportation spends \$58 billion on 100 separate programs run by 5 different agencies with 6,000 employees, with no idea whether that is the most efficient or effective

way to do it because nobody has ever put a metric on it.

We have 30 separate programs on food safety, run by 15 different Federal agencies. We just added a whole bunch more with the last food safety bill—none of which had a metric on it, none of which perfected the food safety in terms of interstate transport, which is undoubtedly a Federal responsibility. How about an efficient and effective way to do that. How about 1 agency being responsible for food safety instead of 15.

We have 18 domestic food and nutrition programs—we spend \$62.5 billion—11 of which we have no idea whether they are performing effectively.

The first question you might ask is, How in the world did we get all these programs? We got all these programs because somebody saw a need and thought that would solve that need. They did so without the benefit of one of the No. 1 obligations of Congress, which is the oversight of the bureaucracy. We have all these complaints by those who favor the earmarking process that if we don't earmark it, then the Federal agencies will spend the money where they are. They forget one little clue in terms of the Congress. We have absolute power to oversee every branch of the Federal Government in terms of their effectiveness and their efficiency.

Yet we have not done it. The Congress has that. Whether it is run by Republicans or Democrats, it is not done. It is not a partisan issue. It is laziness on our part. It is far easier to write a new bill that solves the same problem and not oversee the others. Consequently, we answer the humanitarian, compassionate call to fix something we have done by treating symptoms rather than the disease.

We have a real disease in our country today. The disease is a cancer that will take away our freedom. If you look back in history, all republics have fallen. The average age of a republic is 206 years. How did they fail? What caused them to fail? If you read the history books and look at all of them, you will find that even though they might have been overrun by an enemy, the key factor that caused them to fail was fiscal every time. They lived beyond their means. Look at what is happening to us in the world today. The scope of our power militarily is being limited by our economic power because we are extremely far in debt. When you go to the lead economists, such as Ken Rogoff and Carmen Reinhart—the book they have written is “This Time is Different.” The economists tell us our debt right now—not what is coming this next year but right now—with the interest costs we have today, is costing 1 percent of GDP. We are only going to grow about 3.5 percent this year. If we didn't have the debt, it would be 4.5 percent. That means 1 million more people would have great-paying jobs this year if we didn't have this debt. So there is a clarion call out there coming

from America—not inside Washington—to fix the real problems.

As a physician, what I know is this: If I treat the symptoms of a disease and do not treat the real disease, I ultimately make the disease much worse. I cover up the signs and symptoms of the disease. The disease we have is a disease of not recognizing the very critical nature that you cannot—never—you can never live above and beyond your means without ultimately paying a greater price. The difference between the Federal Government, most of the State governments, and every family is when you have maxed out the credit card, it is maxed. You are not going to get another credit card company to give you more. You will either have to start paying or you will default on it.

The question comes, Will we honor our true commitments? Will we make the hard decisions that are required to put us on a path for renewed prosperity? Will we take real information—and I have offered 70 amendments on this over the past 6 years, which have been voted down—and will we start paying attention now because, ultimately, if we don't make decisions today that will control and set us on a path of prosperity, we are going to be in a position where our debtholders will make our decisions for us. That is when liberty declines. That is when American exceptionalism dies. That is when our destiny is taken from our hands. It should not be that way.

I, again, call on the President to lead this Nation to define the problem, the real threat to our freedom, and come forward and pull us together and let's solve this problem, with everyone recognizing that everyone is going to sacrifice, but the sacrifice will create a future benefit that will be rewarded in the lives of our children and grandchildren.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KIRK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. KIRK. Madam President, I rise to support this continuing resolution. As we know, the Senate is set to pass a short-term funding bill, while negotiations continue on a longer term funding bill for the rest of the year.

The administration has presented us with a request also to fund the government next year and is expected to ask for an increase in the Federal debt ceiling. This legislation cuts about \$4 billion. Up against our annual deficit or the total debt, it is but a microdrop in the budget.

The Federal Government is on track to spend about \$3.7 trillion this fiscal